
Design! Carve! Print! Make a Custom Stamp from iPad to Paper with Sarah Matthews

Chapter 1 - Design! Carve! Print!: Make a Custom Stamp from iPad to Paper

Overview

(upbeat music) - If you're afraid to make custom stamps because of your insecurities with drawing, join me and I'll help you get over that hurdle. I am Sarah Matthews, I am a book artist and printmaker from Maryland. I will show you how to take your favorite photo and upload it to Procreate on your iPad. From that, we'll create a sketch and transfer that to a carving block that we will make into a custom stamp. Plus, we will add additional colors with multiple layers. (upbeat music) Anyone can do this. You can take your custom stamps and print on paper, on cards, and even on the wall. (upbeat music)

Materials

- The materials we are gonna use are cutting mat, two v-gouges, two u-gouges. I'm using Pfeil and Powergrip tools, utility knife, bone folder, pair of scissors, pencil, carving block, iPad with iPad pencil and Procreate, various stamping inks. I have VersaFine Clair in black, in various greens, and Memento and Brilliance, some scratch paper and paper to print on.

Design on Procreate

- To get started, you can take a picture of something in your home, or you can use a photo of my Hoya plant that's in the PDF. The first thing we're going to do is open up Procreate on your iPad. Then you're gonna select Photo, and select the photo that you to bring into Procreate. The next step is to change your brush library. I'm gonna leave mine on Technical Pen. Make sure that is black. And then I'm going to add a layer. And that's where I'm gonna start. Taking my pencil, I'm gonna start outlining the leaves. Not worrying about it being too perfect. It's just a rough sketch. I'm a plant mom. So this is my most recent plant that I picked up before I came out here to beautiful San Francisco. I know you can turn it inside, but I'm old school (laughs). I'm just tracing all the leaves that I want to include in the stamp. If there are there things in here in your stamp that you wanna just not include, it's okay. Nobody's gonna know. Then of course, we have to do the pot. I'm doing the indentations. And then the shadows. I started using Procreate like this in my projects, because it got me out of my comfort zone of thinking that I couldn't draw. So this was a very helpful tool for that. And I'm gonna just quickly sketch out the shadows here, 'cause I wanna include that in this work here. All right. I'm gonna erase this part here, 'cause that's not what I wanted. And then go back in there with the pencil and just fill it right back in. So now I can go back to the layers and unselect the bottom layer, and that is gonna be our final image to create our stamp. If there's anything that's missing that you wanna add, go ahead and do that. I neglected to add the little line here in the leaf, so I'm just gonna put that in there, and then I'm gonna just fix this leaf here, and just fill it in. You can always go back and re-add that layer so you can see. And then unselect it. All right. To print this, you wanna go where the wrench icon is, select JPEG, and then scroll up and select Print. If you don't have a printer, go to your local library, and in this case, you wanna save it to your Google Docs, or email it to yourself so you can print it there.

Transfer, carve, test, and print

- Once your image is printed, you're going to use your pencil to do a tracing, to do a pencil transfer.

I'm gonna take my pencil and just start shading in where the black is printed. I really love using the Blackwing pencil because it's almost like using an HB soft pencil. You get a really good transfer onto the block while using this kind of pencil. And if you're a nerd like me, you can be a member of the club and get exclusive pencils every month. Okay, we're ready to transfer onto the block. So now we're gonna take our pencil transfer. We're gonna turn it on top of the block. We're gonna use a bone folder. You can use a butter knife, anything that has a hard edge to burnish onto the paper. And I'm going to use our nondominant hand to hold onto the page to ensure that it is not moving, and then checking on it. It's looking good. All right, it has been transferred. And then I'm gonna take my pencil and check any other areas that I may have missed. Looks good. Okay, now we're ready to carve. We're gonna start with the smallest V-gouge. And the way that you can tell is by holding it up from this angle, and you can tell that it is a V. So I'm gonna start carving, following the outline of the image. It's important to you use your nondominant hand to turn the block as you're carving especially when you're doing curved lines like this. It just makes it easier. The very first thing that I ever carved was wood and that is a pretty hard substance so using rubber has been life changing for me as an artist. Just have fun with it. It just seems so much faster. And don't worry about trying to do it as fast as I am because I've been doing it a long time. So be gentle with yourself. Don't feel afraid to hit pause and catch up. And also don't forget to breathe. When we're doing something that we think is difficult, we have a tendency to hold our breath. So breathe. Okay, and then now I'm gonna go in and get the curves of the wonderful pot that I have from my Hoya plant. And as you notice, I'm going on the inside of the line and the outside of the line, that way we're creating a border. And then I'm gonna get the shaded area. Make sure you keep your tools parallel to the block. Try not to go down. That way you have to get an accurate carving. Now, we're gonna use our largest V-gouge, and take out the insides of our leaves. And then for the inside of the pot, we gonna use our largest U-gouge to clear out that space. Continue using the V-gouge and the U-gouge to clear out the spaces within the pot and also the leaves. And I've already done that here. Next, we're gonna use the largest U-gouge to clear out these spaces around the plant. I'm just getting these areas out but still maintaining the back. Because when you're printing the block, it's just this piece here then it'll flop around so it's good to keep that part intact. Again, I'm just gonna follow around the line here. And because this area here and this here has like a V-shape, I'm gonna use the V-gouge to clear that out. Okay, and same thing here and here. Just follow along the lines. Now, we're ready to use the utility knife to cut out the extra pieces that we don't want. I'm gonna leave that in intact so the leaf does not flop around when I'm printing. Again, you can get that cleared out using that V-gouge because it has the V-shape. I use the smallest U-gouge for this little piece right there. I'm gonna do a little cleanup before we do a little test print. For the test print, we're gonna use VersaFine Clair Nocturne. Let's take out our stamp pad. We're gonna ink directly on the block. (stamp pad thumping) And turn it right over onto our paper. We can use this side of our hand to press down so we get a good impression. Okay, and lift. All right, so I would say there are a couple of areas that we need to go back in and clean up. Let me grab my carving tools. Close my ink pad so I don't make a mess. And clear out those areas that I don't wanna see. And I'm using my largest U-gouge. That's why it's important to do a test print so you can clear out spaces that you don't wanna see before you start using your good paper. Okay, I do wanna keep some of the noise in because that gives it a character. It's kind of a hand print quality so I'd like to leave some of it in there. I'll go and get this one and this one. (gouge clacking) All right, I think also I'm gonna get this one with the smallest U-gouge. And you can see I had to switch from gouge to gouge and you will start to discern that as you get used to using your tools. Okay, now, because we have already made

our test print, what I wanna you is be able to print my leaves in green so I'm gonna use this as the way of doing that. So I'm just going to use my pencil and just trace along where the leaves are. And then grab my scissors. (paper rustling) Cut that out. Grab a new piece of rubber and transfer that. Burnishing with the bone folder. There we go. And because this is not necessarily like what we're doing here where we're having detail, instead of using my V-gouges or U-gouges, I'm gonna use my utility knife to cut out the shape. So I'm just gonna follow the shape of where the leaves are. And don't worry about, again, being perfect 'cause sometimes I like to see the delineation between the print which would be the outline and the color. It adds character to the print. Come on, baby. There you are. Here we go. And one more, real quick. We wanna color our pot. Here we go. X-Acto knife all the way around. There we go. Now we are ready to print.

Printing layers and patterns

- Let's get printing. We're gonna start with our base stamp. We're gonna ink it up with black. All right, and then we're gonna start in the left-hand corner. Place and print. Lift and go onto the next. Again, place. Okay, lift. Next. Gonna switch the scratch sheet onto the other side and add that edge right there. Okay, and place. Then you're gonna start on the right-hand side going across to make the brick pattern. I'm gonna use this to ink on top. Lift, and then right here, press. Since I notice on the second print that is a little smear at the top, what I'm doing is pulling it from the top instead. Again, scratch sheet. Okay. And then place on top. And then I'm gonna slide this under and place. Lift from the top. Lift from the top, and last one. And place, press down. Lift on the top. That is the first layer of our print. This is the green portion of our print. Pull out our scratch sheet there. And because we have different colors of green especially if we remember the original picture, I wanna kind of mix it up onto the block. So I'm just going to. And I believe it'll add some interest to the leaves when we print them. All right, let's do this. Place, press. Here we go. And it doesn't matter what order you do it in. Just play around with it. And you notice I'm putting them back in the original cover so you don't get mixed up (laughs). All right. Place. Press. So continue on adding green to the rest of your plants. That's why I say it doesn't have to be perfect because it just adds character. Now that we've finished the green, let's print the plant pot. I'm using the chocolate brown. And this has a little sheen to it 'cause it's Brilliance. Left-hand corner. Okay. Continue on printing your pots. As you go all the way down onto the page. Well, this looks great. We can stay right here or we can move on to bonus round. I'm using VersaFine CLAIR charming pink and the end of a pencil. So dab and print. If you don't wanna put it in the plant, put it in the white space. Have fun with it. And then I'm gonna grab my other colors. I wanna hang this on my wall. I love it so much. Remember, you can take any picture in your photo library and turn it into a custom stamp.